



Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers

Good habits for health, growth and development

Feeding the under 3s
the food they need



1. Eat together as a family and make mealtimes relaxed, happy occasions

Make food easy to eat – finger foods are good.

Eat the foods that you would like your toddler to eat.

Praise your toddler when he or she eats well or tries something new – toddlers take time to learn to like new foods.



2. You decide which nutritious foods to offer but let your toddler decide how much to eat

Never insist your toddler eats everything on his or her plate.



3. Offer foods from all 5 food groups each day

Together they give the right mix of nutrients your toddler needs.



4. Have a routine and offer 3 meals and 2–3 snacks each day

Offer 2 courses at each meal and only offer nutritious snacks.

Don't allow grazing on food.



5. Offer 6–8 drinks a day

Give all drinks in a beaker or cup – not bottles. 3–4oz or 100–120ml is about right. Water is a good choice.



6. Give vitamins A & D each day

Choose a vitamin supplement suitable for toddlers – most toddlers don't get enough in their food.



7. Respect your toddler's tastes and preferences – don't force feed

Understand that some children eat almost everything while others are much more picky.

Some like foods kept separate at a meal and others are happy with foods mixed in together.



8. Reward your toddler with your attention – never give food or drink as a reward, treat or for comfort

Play, read or talk with your toddler as a reward. Always give fruit or a nutritious pudding – don't use it as a reward for eating other foods first or for good behaviour.



9. Limit...

fried food, crisps, packet snacks, pastries, cakes and biscuits to very small amounts.

sweet foods to four times a day e.g. as part of the three meals and one snack.

...and avoid

sweetened fruit squashes, fizzy drinks, tea and coffee.

undiluted fruit juices – only give juice well diluted at meal times.

whole nuts which may cause choking or be inhaled.



10. Encourage physical activity for at least 3 hours every day and about 12 hours sleep

All activity such as active play inside or outside, walking, running and dancing counts. Limit TV and other screen time like computers to just 1 hour a day.



Practical help and information
on nutrition and development



Interested in finding out more? Visit www.littlepeoplesplates.co.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about your toddler's health speak to your GP or health visitor.

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